

- You may accompany your friend to either the hospital or the law enforcement station.
- With permission from your friend, enlist other friends and family to help.
- Stay with your friend through the healing process.
- Don't pressure your friend to resume sexual relationships until she/he is ready. This may take some time.

To Report or To Not Report

Reporting a sexual assault to law enforcement is a very individualized decision that victims will need to make for themselves. Remember, if your friend decides not to report, they are still fully entitled to support services and medical care. If your friend does decide to report, you will need to know what to expect from the criminal justice system. Below is a brief overview of what to expect. Your local sexual assault program advocate will be able to more fully help you understand the process in your area and to support you through it.

Hospital Response

A sexual assault evidence kit, sometimes called a "rape kit," is performed by medical personnel to collect evidence at the request of law enforcement. Although medical personnel who collect the evidence are well-trained, the process may be uncomfortable. Support is important; your friend may need you to be there. The cost of collection of the evidence will be assessed to the county. However, there may be other costs incurred at the hospital for medical treatment that are not considered part of the evidence kit. If your friend has reported the assault to law enforcement, she/he may be eligible for Crime Victims' Compensation benefits that can help pay for financial losses such as medical expenses, lost wages, counseling/therapy, and other costs related to the assault.

Law Enforcement Response

Law enforcement will need to ask your friend questions about the assault. Some questions may be very difficult to answer and may not make sense at the time they are asked, but there is a reason for them. It is not unusual for law enforcement to visit with the victim numerous times during the course of an investigation. Once law enforcement has investigated and has been able to identify the offender, they will send the information to the prosecutor.

Prosecutor Response

The prosecutor determines if there is enough evidence to move forward with prosecution. The system sometimes moves slowly. It sometimes seems that just as a victim begins to

feel OK, she/he is thrown back into the middle of the trauma because of a court hearing or trial. Sometimes victims find it very important to have information about the court case and proceedings. Most prosecutors have Victim Witness Coordinators who can help get this information. Victims have a legal right to certain information about the case.

Advocate Response

Advocates from your local sexual assault program can be accessed whether or not your friend chooses to report. Advocates can be helpful to friends and family members of victims. Advocates are trained to be with victims at the hospital, go the law enforcement station, provide individual and group counseling, and provide you with specific information about sexual assault. Whether your friend decides to report, getting in touch with your local sexual assault program can be a very important and helpful step in healing.

Sexual assault is a crisis, and we all handle crisis in different ways. Some victims go into shock after being sexually assaulted, or experience overwhelming fear, anger, shame or anxiety. The emotional reaction to sexual assault is complex and often confusing. Remember that these feelings and experiences are not unusual. The fear and confusion will lessen with time, but the trauma may disrupt your friend's life for awhile.

For support, contact the following:

Kansas Crisis Hotline

1-888-END-ABUSE (1-888-363-2287)

National Sexual Assault Hotline

1-800-656-HOPE (1-800-656-4673)

For more information:

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

634 SW Harrison Topeka, KS 66603
785-232-9784 www.kcsdv.org

This project was supported by Grant N0. 2004-MU-AX-0084 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



HOW TO SUPPORT A VICTIM OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

If you are reading this, a person you care about has probably been a victim of sexual assault. Because you care about this person, you may experience feelings that may be similar to those of the person who has been assaulted. These feelings may include anger, shock, helplessness, grief, and, perhaps, even guilt. You will never know exactly how a victim feels about the assault, but you can listen and be supportive. This brochure will assist you in helping the victim cope with the trauma of the assault, as well as assist you with your own trauma related to the assault.

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence



SAFETY, ACCOUNTABILITY & JUSTICE
for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence and their children

How to Start the Conversation

Seek out a private, quiet place to begin talking. Allow plenty of time to talk at length. Start by saying the following:

- It is not your fault.
- I am here to listen.
- I am sorry it happened.

During the conversation - What do you do?

- Listen. Your friend may need to tell you about the assault over and over again.
- Believe. Survivors need to know that you believe what happened. It is rare that people make up stories about sexual assault.
- Validate feelings. Acknowledge your friend's sadness, anger, fear, or confusion.
- Assure. Tell your friend that she/he did the best she/he could do to survive the situation and that no one deserves to be sexually assaulted.
- Don't say "When are you going to get over this?"
- Don't blame or judge your friend.

Now that you know, what can you do? Support

- Avoid treating your friend like a helpless victim.
- Healing takes time. Respect your friend's pace and be patient.
- Accept your friend's decision whether to report the assault and/or to cooperate with the prosecution.
- Help your friend with plans, but don't make decisions for her/him.
- Respect your friend's right to tell or not tell others about the assault.
- Only give advice if and when your friend asks for it.

Educate

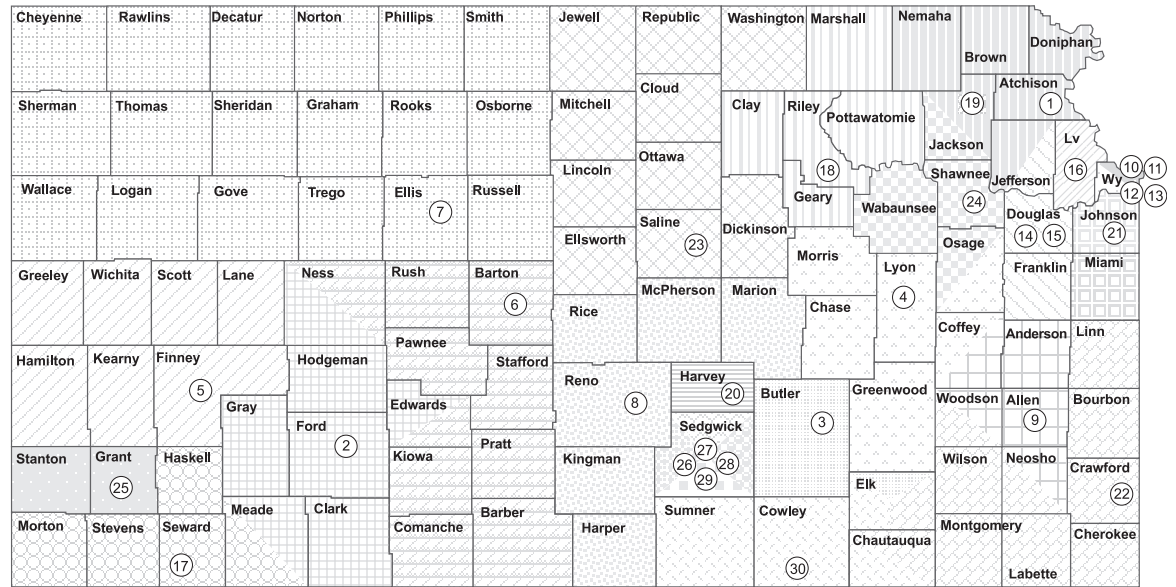
- Remind your friend that sexual assault is a crime and is never the victim's fault.
- Remind your friend that millions of people have experienced sexual assault and that she/he is not alone.

Act

- Help your friend identify support systems and provide information on local crisis or mental health providers.

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Kansas Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs



1. Atchison	DoVES	800-367-7075 or 913-367-0363
2. Dodge City	Crisis Center of Dodge City	620-225-6510
3. El Dorado	Family Life Center of Butler County	800-8870-6967 or 316-321-7104
4. Emporia	SOS, Inc.	800-825-1295 or 620-342-1870
5. Garden City	Family Crisis Services	620-275-5911
6. Great Bend	Family Crisis Center	866-792-1885 or 620-792-1885
7. Hays	NW KS Domestic and Sexual Violence Svcs.	800-794-4624 or 785-625-3055
8. Hutchinson	Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Center	800-701-3630 or 620-663-2522
9. Iola	Hope Unlimited	620-365-7566
10. Kansas City, KS	El Centro, Inc. ¡Si Se Puede! (<i>domestic violence</i>)	913-677-0177
11. Kansas City, KS	Friends of Yates /Joyce H.Williams Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	913-321-0951
12. Kansas City, MO	KCAVP	816-561-0550
13. Kansas City, MO	MOCSA (<i>sexual assault</i>)	816-531-0233
14. Lawrence	GaDuGi Safe Center (<i>sexual assault</i>)	785-841-2345
15. Lawrence	Women's Transitional Care Services (<i>domestic violence</i>)	800-770-3030 or 785-843-3333
16. Leavenworth	Alliance Against Family Violence	800-644-1441 or 913-682-9131
17. Liberal	Liberal Area Rape Crisis and DV Services	620-624-8818
18. Manhattan	The Crisis Center, Inc.	800-727-2785 or 785-539-2785
19. Mayetta	Prairie Band Potawatomi Family Violence Prevention Program	888-966-2932 or 785-966-2932
20. Newton	Harvey County DV/SA Task Force	800-487-0510 or 316-283-0350
21. Overland Park	Safehome, Inc.	888-432-4300 or 913-262-2868
22. Pittsburg	Crisis Resource Center of Southeast Kansas, Inc.	800-794-9148 or 620-231-8251
23. Salina	Domestic Violence Assoc. of Central Kansas	800-874-1499 or 785-827-5862
24. Topeka	YWCA Battered Women Task Force	888-822-2983 or daytime 785-354-7927 evening 785-234-3300
25. Ulysses	DoVES of Grant County	620-356-2608
26. Wichita	Catholic Charities Harbor House (<i>domestic violence</i>)	866-899-5522 or 316-263-6000
27. Wichita	StepStone (<i>domestic violence</i>)	316-265-1611
28. Wichita	Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center (<i>sexual assault</i>)	316-263-3002 or por español: 316-263-2044
29. Wichita	YWCA Women's Crisis Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	316-267-7233
30. Winfield	Safe Homes, Inc.	800-794-7672 or 620-221-4357